A Sociological study of Auto-rickshaw Drivers in Ranchi City

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1. State of The Art:

Imagine the daily hustle of Ranchi, its streets alive with the blare of honking horns, the buzz of conversations, and the constant hum of shared auto-rickshaws weaving through the thick traffic. For many in the city, especially those without reliable access to public transport, these three-wheelers are more than just a mode of travel. They are getting people to work, school, and the countless errands of daily life **(Satija, 2018; Tiwari & Jain, 2014)**. Packed with passengers heading in the same direction, these autos reflect the spirit of shared effort and resourcefulness that defines many Indian cities. But behind this crucial mobility service lies a largely unseen world: that of the auto-rickshaw drivers. These drivers, often from marginalized communities, brave the chaotic streets of Ranchi every day. For them, the auto is not just a vehicle but their mobile workplace. They juggle long hours on the road with little to no job security, social protections, or healthcare support **(Bhowmik, 2012; ILO, 2018)**. They're exposed to extreme weather, endure constant negotiations with passengers, and face the constant uncertainty of how much they will earn each day **(Ghosh & Bhattacharya, 2016; Patel, Singh, & Rana, 2017)**. Their resilience is undeniable, but so is the deep vulnerability they carry.

This study focuses on the lived reality of these drivers, who are often overlooked despite playing a key role in the urban transport system. In Ranchi, where public transit is stretched and unreliable, auto-rickshaws have emerged as an accessible, flexible, and affordable option for the city's commuters **(Urban Development & Housing Department, 2021)**. As the city grows, so does the demand for these services, making the auto-rickshaw drivers' roles more crucial than ever. However, the drivers' lives are troubled with challenges. Operating in a loosely regulated environment, they face socio-economic hardships and health risks that rarely come under the spotlight **(NCEUS, 2007; Rathi, Verma, & Jha, 2021).** Most are self-employed, underpaid, and work long hours without the safety net of formal labor rights or regulatory protection. Despite being integral to the city's transport system, their lives remain largely absent from academic research and policy discussions.

Shared auto-rickshaws operating on fixed routes play a critical role in Ranchi's urban mobility, providing a crucial link for a large segment of the population. This study centers on the drivers of these fixed-route auto-rickshaws, whose work is characterized by specific operational patterns and constraints. The fixed-route system, while essential for urban connectivity, also creates particular socio-economic and health-related vulnerabilities for drivers, including income instability tied to route demand and specific occupational health hazards associated with route characteristics **(Agarwal & Jain, 2020)**. This research seeks to understand these vulnerabilities and inform strategies to support this vital workforce. Through a sociological lens, we will explore their daily experiences, their demographic profiles, their income levels, the conditions of their work, and their access to healthcare. By understanding these individual stories, set against the broader socio-economic and institutional backdrop, this research hopes to not only highlight the personal challenges these drivers face but also provide a framework for future policy development that might improve their working and living conditions.

The Pivotal Role of Auto-Rickshaw Drivers in Ranchi City

Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi go beyond their role as simple transporters; they are active participants within the socio-economic life of the city, playing multiple key roles that have an immense influence on the daily lives of its citizens and the urban vibrancy as a whole **(Tigari & Santhosh, 2020)**. Most importantly, they extend necessary last-mile connectivity, filling gaps in the formal public transport system, especially where buses or larger vehicles do not cover **(Kumar et al., 2022).** This position is essential to facilitate residents' access to their homes, workplaces, schools, and basic services, particularly in the peripheral and high-density areas of the city.

Apart from regular daily commuting, auto-rickshaw drivers also serve a critical function in providing emergency and urgent transportation. Their presence provides a lifeline form of rapid and flexible transportation in cases of medical emergencies, personal needs, and work urgencies, frequently serving as an indispensable lifeline at times of necessity **(Mani, Pai, & Aggarwal, 2012)**.

The auto-rickshaw industry offers direct livelihood opportunities for thousands of families in Ranchi, not just for the drivers, but also for mechanics, spare part vendors, and other ancillary service providers dependent upon this sector **(Kumar et al., 2017)**. Further to their fundamental transport role, the drivers frequently also serve as unprepared tour guides and providers of local information for passengers, especially those who are visiting for the first time or late at night, to create a feeling of safety and comfort of movement within the city **(Tigari & Santhosh, 2020)**. Despite these multifaceted and essential contributions to Ranchi's urban life, the drivers often remain marginalized and their crucial role frequently goes unrecognized in broader urban planning and societal considerations **(Mani, Pai, & Aggarwal, 2012).**

Auto-rickshaws in Ranchi: A Growing Sector

Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand, has surely seen considerable demographic growth, where its population rose from around 1.1 million in the year 2001 to over 1.4 million by 2011 **(Census of India, 2011)** and continuing further to achieve around 1.8-2.0 million by mid-2020s. This swift urbanization has been driven by a corresponding increase in the need for effective and affordable urban transport solutions, placing auto-rickshaws, both the conventional three-wheelers and the more common battery-powered e-rickshaws, as a main mode of transport for a large percentage of the city's working-class and middle-class population. As of 2024, statistics from Regional Transport Authority (RTA) and local auto-rickshaw union numbers indicate a registered fleet in excess of 12,000 vehicles plying Ranchi's varied urban environment. Nonetheless, this figure probably understates the size of the operational fleet since a considerable number of vehicles operate without official registration or under mutual permits, pointing to the deeply ingrained informal nature of this crucial segment of the urban transport economy **(Informal Transport Sector Studies in Indian Cities, 2019)**. This informality frequently leads to insufficient overall regulation, regular supervision, and proper safeguarding for the drivers who traverse this sophisticated system.

Challenges Faced by Auto-rickshaw Drivers

1. Income Instability and Rising Competition

Ranchi auto-rickshaw drivers have a common daily earnings bracket of ₹400 to ₹700, a highly volatile amount that can change according to current fuel prices, the duration of their work hours, and the traffic load on their routes. After deducting the necessary daily operating costs, such as fuel (approximately ₹250–₹300 for petrol or CNG), maintenance on the vehicle, and any responsibilities in terms of vehicle rental or loan payments, their net take-home pay generally shrinks to a tenuous minimum (**Rathi et al., 2021**). Their financial instability has been compounded over the past several years by an array of contributory factors:

- **Market Saturation caused by Increased Permits:** The allocation of more auto-rickshaw permits without an accompanying rationalization of operating routes has resulted in an excess number of vehicles in some parts of the city, making competition for commuters severe and thereby pushing down fares and revenues (**Bhowmik, 2012**). It is imperative to study the urban planning policy regarding auto-rickshaw permits in Ranchi and how they affected the lives of the drivers.
- **The Intrusion of E-rickshaws:** The growing popularity of battery-powered e-rickshaws, whose lower running expenses are often advertised, has prompted their tactical deployment on major and profitable routes (**Sarkar, 2019**). Examining the differential regulatory regimes and fiscal incentives for e-rickshaws and conventional autos in Ranchi is essential.
- **The Role of App-Based Ride-Hailing Platforms:** The increasing usage of app-based ride-hailing services, along with their convenience, transparent fares, and seeming reliability, has started to take a portion of urban commuters from conventional auto-rickshaws, especially from high-demanding zones like along railway stations, shopping malls, and airport approaches (**Agarwal & Jain, 2020**). It would be interesting to know the penetration level of such platforms in Ranchi and its direct effect on the auto-rickshaw segment.

These inter-linked developments have not just intensified inter-sectoral competition between auto-rickshaw drivers but have also resulted in high levels of mental stress and a hike in their working hours on a daily basis while they compete to retain their already reduced income levels. An investigation into the coping strategies employed by drivers against these economic challenges would be an enriching addition to the study.

2. Health Concerns and Lack of Healthcare Access

Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi are exposed to a range of significant health hazards stemming from the nature of their occupation and lifestyle:

- **Long Working Hours:** The necessity to earn a sufficient income often compels drivers to work exceptionally long hours, typically ranging from 10 to 14 hours per day, leading to chronic fatigue and increased vulnerability to various health issues (**Ghosh & Bhattacharya, 2016**).

• **Exposure to Environmental Hazards:** Their constant presence on the roads exposes them to high levels of air and noise pollution, as well as extreme weather conditions, including intense heat during the summer months and exposure to dust and fumes throughout the year. This can lead to respiratory illnesses, eye problems, and heat-related stress (**Patel et al., 2017**).
• **Irregular Dietary Habits:** The demands of their work often result in irregular meal times and a reliance on unhealthy roadside food options, contributing to gastrointestinal problems and nutritional deficiencies (**Kumar & Mishra, 2020**).
• **Sleep Deprivation and** Stress: The combination of long working hours, income insecurity, traffic congestion, and interactions with passengers and authorities contributes to chronic sleep deprivation and elevated levels of psychological stress.

As a result, auto-rickshaw drivers are typically affected with a variety of physical conditions, such as chronic backache, eye strain and vision impairment, respiratory infections, joint pain, hypertension, and a higher risk of developing chronic diseases like diabetes. The ongoing economic stresses and difficult working conditions tend to lead to mental health problems like anxiety, depression, and chronic fatigue.

In spite of such major health hazards, formal health care services are highly inaccessible to the majority of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi. Most of them end up using readily available but commonly suboptimal alternatives like over-the-counter drugs bought from local pharmacies or visits to private clinics, which prove to be expensive (**Desai, 2021**). Very few avail themselves of government-run health schemes or have any type of health insurance cover. Levels of awareness about occupational health programs and preventive healthcare practices are startlingly low among this occupational group. An exploration of the barriers to healthcare access experienced by these drivers, their health-seeking behaviors, and the influence of social networks on their health choices would be enlightening.

3. Institutional and Policy-Level Challenges

Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi face a multitude of challenges stemming from the existing institutional and policy frameworks:

• **Fines and Toll Penalties:** The recent implementation of strict traffic regulations, coupled with increased road tolls and the imposition of significant fines for issues such as the lack of proper vehicle documentation or parking violations, poses a substantial financial burden on many auto-rickshaw drivers (**Transport Research Wing, 2019**). For those already struggling with low incomes, these fines can be crippling, leading to fear, anxiety, and further economic hardship.
• **Inadequate Insurance and Social Security:** A comprehensive accidental insurance policy that covers all auto-rickshaw drivers is noticeably absent. The majority operate as either owner-drivers with limited resources or as rent-based drivers with even fewer protections, effectively excluding them from formal labour protections and social security benefits (**NCEUS, 2007**). While government schemes such as e-Shram or Ayushman Bharat exist, their implementation among auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi appears to be inconsistent, and awareness about these schemes and the processes for accessing them remains low. Investigating the extent of social security coverage among auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi and the reasons for low enrolment in existing schemes is crucial.

• **Lack of Identity and Representation:** As workers within the informal economy, many auto-rickshaw drivers lack proper identification and documentation, including valid driving licenses, Aadhaar-linked permits, or membership in recognized labour unions (**Kundu & Chakraborty, 2021**). This lack of formal identity and collective representation hinders their ability to access welfare benefits, voice their concerns to relevant authorities, or participate meaningfully in policymaking processes that directly affect their livelihoods. Examining the role and effectiveness of auto-rickshaw unions in Ranchi and the barriers to collective action among drivers would be a significant contribution.

Though available academic literature does provide some information regarding the lives and issues of auto-rickshaw drivers in large metropolitan cities of India, like Delhi, Mumbai, or Bengaluru, there is a serious lack of targeted sociological analysis regarding these vital workers in smaller or mid-sized cities like Ranchi. This research gap is specifically troubling because the difficulties faced by auto-rickshaw drivers are commonly deeply rooted in the particular regional economic systems, localized urban policy, and prevailing patterns of class-based disparities characteristic of these urban environments. The processes of urban informal work are highly subject to variation between megacities and other smaller cities. Therefore, there is a need to:

• **Document the Specific Socio-Economic Realities of Drivers in the Ranchi Context:** This research aims to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of the income levels, expenditure patterns, living conditions, social networks, and overall socio-economic status of auto-rickshaw drivers operating within the unique urban environment of Ranchi.

• **Examine the Occupational Health Burden:** The study will systematically investigate the specific health problems prevalent among auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi, analysing the links between their working conditions, lifestyle choices (often constrained by their work), and the prevalence of both physical and mental health issues.

• **Analyse the Impact of Urban Transport Transformations in Ranchi:** This research will explore the specific ways in which the rise of e-rickshaws and the increasing adoption of app-based mobility services are reshaping the urban transport landscape in Ranchi and the consequent effects on the livelihoods and working conditions of traditional auto-rickshaw drivers.

By addressing these key areas, this research will contribute significantly to filling a crucial gap in our understanding of how urban livelihoods are being fundamentally reshaped by ongoing technological advancements, evolving economic structures, and shifting regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, it aims to provide valuable empirical data and evidence-based policy recommendations that can be utilized by local authorities, urban planners, and civil society organizations to improve the lives and working conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi and promote a more inclusive and equitable urban mobility system. This study holds the potential to inform policy discussions and interventions aimed at recognizing and supporting this vital yet often invisible segment of the urban workforce.

Understanding Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as **"a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence [1] of disease or infirmity."** This definition, [2] adopted in 1948, emphasizes a holistic view of health that extends beyond just the absence of illness, highlighting the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and social aspects in achieving overall well-being (**World Health Organization, 1948**). In its recommendations, the WHO advocates for a multifaceted approach to health promotion and maintenance, focusing on healthy diets rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low in salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats; regular physical activity for all age groups; and addressing the social determinants of health, which include factors like income, education, living conditions, and social support networks.

Auto-rickshaw drivers constitute a distinctive and frequently marginalized segment within the urban informal economy. The interconnected dimensions of their socio-economic standing and health status are shaped by factors such as social class, patterns of urban mobility, the nature of informal employment, and existing public policies. Although specific academic inquiry into this group remains somewhat limited, a developing body of literature across the fields of sociology, urban studies, and labour studies offers a foundational understanding of their circumstances.

Migration and the Auto-rickshaw Workforce in Ranchi

Migration has significantly influenced the socio-economic composition of the auto-rickshaw driver community in Ranchi city. A substantial number of drivers are first-generation migrants from rural districts of Jharkhand such as Gumla, Simdega, Latehar, and Lohardaga, as well as from nearby states like Bihar and West Bengal **(Bhagat, 2011; Tumbe, 2018)**. Migration is often propelled by declining agricultural incomes, landlessness, and the absence of sustainable employment in their native regions **(Deshingkar & Akter, 2009)**. Ranchi, as the administrative and commercial center of Jharkhand, presents greater livelihood opportunities, especially in the informal sector where entry barriers are relatively low. Auto-rickshaw driving becomes a viable occupation for many due to its low educational requirements and immediate income prospects **(Kundu & Sarangi, 2005)**. However, migrant drivers frequently face precarious living conditions, lacking stable housing, social security, and health care access **(NCEUS, 2007)**. Many reside in informal settlements or shared rental accommodations, reinforcing their vulnerability within the urban economy. Exploring migration patterns, motivations, and challenges among Ranchi's auto-rickshaw drivers is vital for understanding their socio-economic marginality and urban survival strategies. This study aims to analyse how migratory trajectories influence drivers' work experiences, social networks, and prospects for upward mobility in the city.

Informal Sector and Urban Mobility

The informal sector has been extensively examined as a crucial yet precarious component of urban economies in India. Scholars like **Jan Breman (1996) and Amitabh Kundu (2002)** have characterized the informal workforce as a "reserve army of labour," often existing without adequate social safety nets or job security**. Kundu (2002)**'s work on the informalization of urban areas underscores how workers such as auto-rickshaw drivers, despite their essential contribution to urban life, are excluded from institutional support mechanisms.

Regarding urban mobility, **Ghazala Shahab Ahmed (2014**) suggests that informal modes of transport, including auto-rickshaws, fulfill the critical function of "last-mile connectivity" that formal transportation systems often fail to provide. Her research conducted in Bhopal and Lucknow contextualizes how auto drivers bridge infrastructural gaps in expanding urban centers.

Socio-economic Conditions of Auto Drivers

Studies conducted by **R. Radhakrishnan (2010)** and **M.P. Boraian (2012)** indicate that a majority of auto-rickshaw drivers in cities like Chennai and Madurai are individuals who have migrated to urban areas, often representing the first generation to do so, and frequently possess low levels of literacy and lack access to formal banking services or social welfare programs.

In research undertaken in Delhi, **Dunu Roy (2004**) highlighted that auto drivers operate within highly competitive markets and frequently lack proper route permits due to complex bureaucratic procedures and corruption.

R. Lakshmanan and S. Ramachandran (2015), in their investigation of auto-rickshaw drivers in Tamil Nadu, drew attention to how the increasing presence of e-rickshaws and app-based aggregators has introduced new forms of insecurity, heightened competition, and increased marginalization.

Health Conditions and Occupational Hazards

Concerns regarding the health status of auto-rickshaw drivers have emerged as a growing area of focus within occupational sociology. A study by **S. V. Subramanian (2009)** examining the informal sector links adverse working conditions to the "social gradient" observed in health outcomes.

Aparna Joshi (2016) emphasized the limited awareness of health schemes and the underutilization of government healthcare facilities among informal workers, including auto drivers. Her research advocated for tailored occupational health outreach programs designed for mobile workers.

In Pune, **Dr. Anil Patil (2017**) conducted a survey involving 300 auto-rickshaw drivers, revealing that:

- Over 60% experienced musculoskeletal disorders resulting from prolonged periods of sitting.
- More than 45% reported issues related to their respiratory health.
- Prevalence of stress, hypertension, and irregular eating patterns was significant.

Technology and Market Disruption

The advent of technology-driven mobility platforms (such as app-based ride aggregators) has altered the structure of the auto-rickshaw industry. **Nitin Sethi (2020**), in his research on mobility and gig work, demonstrates how traditional auto drivers face diminished demand, fare competition, and loss of customers due to algorithmic allocation of rides. While these platforms offer convenience to passengers, they worsen inequalities among drivers who are not integrated into the digital infrastructure.

Studies by **Jasleen Kaur (2021)** and **Ravi Sundaram (2022)** suggest that the expansion of platform capitalism within transport sectors tends to weaken the collective bargaining power of workers and destabilize established informal economies.

Policy Exclusion and Social Invisibility

Despite the considerable socio-economic contributions of auto drivers, their representation within policy frameworks remains inadequate. **Renana Jhabvala (2011**) of SEWA points out how informal workers often remain "policy orphans", lacking protection as employees and recognition as entrepreneurs. Her advocacy for social security provisions for unorganized workers highlights the importance of identity documentation, health insurance, and accident coverage.

Reports from the **International Labour Organization (ILO, 2013, 2019**) further emphasize the urgent need for occupational safety measures, access to insurance, and policy inclusion for workers in informal transport. These reports highlight the gendered and class-based neglect experienced by individuals in such occupations.

Theoretical Framework

This research aims to explore the socio-economic status and health conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi City, placing itself within the core concerns of sociological inquiry, particularly the study of the informal economy, urban labor, social inequality, and the social determinants of health. To provide a solid, multidimensional analytical framework for this study, several key theoretical orientations will be employed.

The primary theoretical perspective for this research is **Amartya Sen's Capability Approach** (**1999**, **1992**). This theory focuses on the actual capabilities of individuals, what opportunities and freedoms they have to achieve functions they value. It offers a strong ethical foundation for analyzing the deprivations and hardships faced by auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi. By examining capabilities, this research goes beyond economic indicators and looks at the real freedoms these drivers have in areas such as health, economic security, social participation, and overall well-being. It enables a deeper understanding of how socio-economic and health challenges limit their ability to live the lives they value within the social and economic context of the city.

To complement the **Capability Approach** and provide insight into the structural forces at play, this study will also incorporate **A.R. Desai's Marxist View of the State and Informal Labour (1979).** Desai's work on the Indian state's role in capital development helps to contextualize the marginalization of auto-rickshaw drivers within broader political and economic systems. This perspective allows us to explore how state policies and priorities may contribute, either directly or indirectly, to the insecure working conditions, low earnings, and lack of formal labor rights that these workers face. It offers a critical lens to examine the systemic inequalities shaping the capabilities of these drivers.

Additionally, **Labour Process Theory (1973)**, as developed by **Harry Braverman,** will be used to analyze the nature of auto-rickshaw driving as a form of urban labor. This perspective focuses on the organization and control of work and its effects on the workers' physical and mental health, key aspects of their capabilities. By investigating the daily life of auto-rickshaw drivers, such as extended work hours, exposure to environmental risks, and unpredictable

income, this framework helps identify how the specific characteristics of their labor either enhance or limit their well-being. Building on the foundational work of **Keith Hart** on the **informal economy**, the research incorporates insights from the **Sociology of Informal Work and Self Employment (1973)**. This lens emphasizes the absence of formal protections, the unpredictability of earnings, and the drivers' dependence on informal norms and peer relationships to sustain livelihoods.

In the above context, **Pierre Bourdieu's** theory of **Social Capital (1986)** becomes particularly useful. Social capital, the resources accessible through social networks and informal associations, helps explain how drivers navigate bureaucratic hurdles, secure access to parking spaces, receive support in times of crisis, or even learn about welfare schemes. These embedded relationships serve as informal safety nets and deeply influence who survives better in the urban informal landscape, making social capital an integral component of capability.Furthermore, the **Social Construction of Health Perspective** will be used to understand how drivers perceive health risks and navigate access to healthcare within their socio-economic context, which in turn influences their overall health and well-being. Through the integration of these theoretical perspectives, centered around Sen's Capability Approach, this study will offer a sophisticated sociological analysis of the socio-economic status and health conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi. The research aims to move beyond simple descriptive accounts, providing a richly nuanced examination of their lives, the structural forces that shape them, and the implications for their basic capabilities in the context of urban labor and social inequality.

2. Problems to be Investigated:

Ranchi auto-rickshaw drivers, especially those who drive in the shared transportation system, go through a complex set of social, economic, and health-related issues that are worthy of serious academic scrutiny. The research proposes to examine these multilayered challenges using a systematic and evidence-based inquiry. One of the main concerns is the social background of the drivers—age, education, migration status, and community affiliation can strongly influence their opportunities, working conditions, and access to support systems. Through the analysis of these social determinants, the research aims to identify whether specific groups encounter more obstacles and whether auto-rickshaw driving is usually a last resort for individuals who have no other livelihoods.

Economically, they face severe insecurity. After deducting expenses on a day-to-day basis such as fuel, maintenance, and permits, many of them are left with barely enough income to meet most basic needs including food, shelter, and education. The arrival of e-rickshaws, ride-hailing, and fiercer competition has made it ever more challenging to make a steady income. The lack of formal labour rights, security of employment, and social protection merely adds to their helplessness. Added to this are concerns such as harassment, unfair fines, and policy neglect by authorities. This research will evaluate how these pressures influence both their ability to earn a living and wider life chances.

Physical and mental health is another urgent area of concern. The conditions of their work subject drivers to long working hours, pollution, bad ergonomics, and untimely meals, resulting in typical diseases like backache, respiratory diseases, tiredness, and eye problems. Drivers psychologically also struggle with anxiety, stress, and depression fueled by incessant insecurity and loneliness. These mostly do not have access to affordable or routine health care, compelling many to defer or forego treatment. The research will examine the incidence and severity of

such health conditions as well as the coping strategies drivers employ in the absence of formal medical care.

The study will assess the accessibility, information, and utility of policies and welfare programs targeted to informal workers. Most drivers are still being kept out of social security programs

because they work in an unorganized manner. The study will critically examine the effectiveness of implementing the existing governmental schemes and seek to identify barriers that hinder their effective inclusion within the social welfare system. By analyzing these problems comprehensively on social, economic, health, and policy fronts. this study aims to give a grounded insight into the problems of shared auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi and present avenues for effective reform.

3. Objectives of the Investigation and Motivation:

The present research is driven by the increasing awareness of informal sector workers as key players in urban sustainability, yet at the same time as vulnerable agents. Auto-rickshaw drivers toil for extended periods, get exposed to occupational risks, contend with intense competition from other emerging transport options, and in many cases lack even minimal welfare guarantees. Their existence mirrors the intricate convergence of social class, urban precariousness, health inequity, and institutional neglect. The research relies on sociological understanding to deconstruct such complexities and deliver a grounded understanding of their everyday lives.

The specific **objectives** of the investigation are as follows:

1. To analyse the socio-demographic and migration pattern of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi city.
2. To evaluate the social relation and co-operation of auto rickshaw drivers with the society.
3. To examine the economic conditions and challenges faced by these drivers.
4. To understand the physical and mental health status of auto-rickshaw drivers.
5. To evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and aimed at improving the condition of auto-rickshaw drivers.

By fulfilling these objectives, the study intends not only to generate empirical knowledge but also to offer actionable insights that can inform urban planning, labour policy, and health programs aimed at supporting informal workers. The motivation behind this research stems from a commitment to social justice, equity, and inclusive development, emphasizing the importance of bringing marginalized voices into academic discourse and public policy considerations.

4. Research hypothesis:

This section converts the problem statements into hypotheses that can be tested, building the foundation for the quantitative research. These hypotheses define the expected connections between diverse socio-economic factors, health impacts, social inclusion perceptions, and policy variables for auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi.

This research aims to investigate the socio-economic status and health status of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi city through an exploratory and scientific research based on sociological analysis. With reference to the research aims, the following **hypotheses** have been set to frame the investigation:

1. There is significant effect of migration on auto rickshaw drivers in Ranchi city.
2. Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi have significant social relations and cooperation with society.
3. Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi face unstable and insufficient income, with rising competition and limited financial security posing major economic challenges.
4. Auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi experience significant physical and mental health issues due to poor working conditions, long hours, and lack of healthcare access.
5. Existing government policies and welfare schemes are inadequate in addressing the socio-economic and health-related needs of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi.

Through the framing of these explicit and quantifiable predictions, the study seeks to empirically verify the issues underscored in the problem statement and contribute to richer understanding of this critical but mostly excluded urban labor force's lived experiences. The above data gathering and statistical interpretation will be driven towards either validating or negating these hypotheses, thus providing empirical evidence of their occupation's risky nature and aiding potential interventions as well as policy recommendations.

5. Research Design and Methodology:

This present study utilizes a scientific and systematic methodology based on the **scientific method principles** to investigate the socio-economic standing and medical conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi city. The research is organized through properly defined research aims, development of testable hypotheses, systematic collection and analysis of empirical evidence, and rational interpretation of findings obtained. By following the scientific process, the research will attempt to guarantee objectivity, accuracy in measurement, and future replicability potential in exploring this occupational group's complex realities.

The research largely embraces a **quantitative approach** to data gathering with the goal of capturing those elements of respondents' lives to numerical measurement. On key variables of income levels and variations, the daily and weekly work hours, educational attainment to a level, household size, household composition, and a host of physical and mental health measures, numerical information will be regularly collected. This focus on measurable data allows the use of statistical analysis methods, making it possible to establish trends, establish correlations between varying factors, and comparative analyses of socio-economic and health situations across various segments of the chosen sample. The quantitative method offers an organized framework for testing the hypothesis developed and reaching statistically informed conclusions.

The main tool for quantitative data gathering will be a carefully crafted **interview schedule**. The schedule will include a well-ordered list of **close-ended** as well as restricted open-ended questions. Close-ended questions will include structured, pre-coded response alternatives to ensure uniformity and convenience of statistical analysis. These will be used to obtain specific

numerical data and categorical data related to the research variables. Furthermore, the presence of some limited open-ended questions will enable respondents to give short qualitative observations, individual experiences, and situational facts that might not be completely represented in the structured format. This mix is meant to optimize the gathering of similar quantitative data and still offer a level of flexibility to comprehend the dynamics of the drivers' lifestyles. The interview schedule will be pilot-tested on a small group of auto-rickshaw drivers to determine any ambiguities, check for clarity, and make necessary modifications before applying the instrument more broadly.

The **sampling technique** used in this study is **non-probability purposive sampling**, specifically focusing on auto-rickshaw drivers who work within Ranchi city. A sample size of 200 respondents will be strategically chosen to take part in the research. This will be done based on their operation along four main transport routes within the city with 50 drivers to be targeted from each route. This **area-based segmentation** is a conscious effort to achieve geographical diversity in the sample, acknowledging that socio-economic and health factors may differ based on the particular operational context and passenger base corresponding to various parts of Ranchi. Though this non-random sampling technique enables participants from important areas of interest to be included and allows intra-city differences to be explored, it should be noted that the findings might not be statistically generalizable to the overall population of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi. Nonetheless, it is an appropriate method for this exploratory study that seeks to uncover important patterns and issues within certain contexts.

To complement the quantitative data gathered through the interview schedules and to gain a deeper understanding of the daily realities of auto-rickshaw drivers, this research will also employ **quasi-participant observation**. This method will involve the researcher spending time in the field, specifically along the four selected operational routes in Ranchi, to observe the drivers in their natural work environment. The focus of these observations will be on the drivers' daily activities, interactions with passengers, fellow drivers, and traffic authorities, the challenges they encounter (such as traffic congestion or passenger disputes), and their general working patterns and coping strategies. It is important to note that the researcher's role will be primarily that of an observer; there will be no active participation in the drivers' work. This quasi-participant approach will provide valuable contextual data, enriching the study's findings and offering a more nuanced perspective on the socio-economic and health conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi.

Limitations of the Research:

While this study aims to offer a comprehensive sociological analysis of the socio-economic status and health conditions of shared auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi, it is subject to certain limitations that must be acknowledged:

1. **Non-probability Sampling Bias**:

   The study adopts purposive sampling, which, while useful for targeting relevant respondents, may limit the generalizability of the findings to the entire population of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi.

   However, while purposive sampling limits the generalizability of the findings to all auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi, it was chosen to allow for in-depth investigation of specific operational routes and to capture the diversity of experiences within these key

areas. To address the potential bias the findings will be interpreted with caution, emphasizing the contextual nature of the data.

2. **Self-reported Data**:

   Much of the data concerning income, health conditions, and stress levels will be based on self-reporting by the respondents. This introduces the possibility of exaggeration, underreporting, or recall bias.

   However, to mitigate potential self-reporting bias, the interview schedule will be designed to include cross-validation questions, where responses can be compared for consistency. Respondents will be assured of the confidentiality of their responses, which can encourage more honest reporting.

3. **Urban-centric Focus**:

   Although Ranchi represents a mid-sized Indian city, the study's findings may not reflect conditions in smaller towns or rural areas, where the nature of informal transport and associated socio-economic dynamics might differ.

   To contextualize the findings, the study will include a detailed description of Ranchi's urban characteristics, highlighting the urban-specific factors that shape the drivers' experiences. This research provides valuable insights into urban informal transport dynamics and can inform urban-specific policy development.

4. **Time and Resource Constraints**:

   The research is limited by the duration of the fieldwork and available resources, which may affect the depth of observational methods or follow-up interviews for validation and triangulation.

   To address this, the observation periods will be strategically sampled to capture variations in traffic flow and working conditions. Additionally, the number of in-depth follow-up interviews will be limited.

Ethical Considerations:

The research will adhere to the following ethical considerations throughout its design, data collection, and analysis phases:

1. **Informed Consent**:

   Every participant will be fully informed about the purpose, nature, and scope of the study before participation. Verbal or written consent will be obtained, depending on the respondent's comfort level and literacy status.

2. **Confidentiality and Anonymity**:

   Respondents' identities will be kept confidential. No personally identifying information will be published or disclosed. Data will be stored securely and used solely for academic purposes.

3. **Voluntary Participation**:

   Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary. Drivers will have the right to decline answering specific questions or withdraw from the study at any point without facing any negative consequences.

4. **Cultural Sensitivity**:

   The researcher will remain aware of and sensitive to the social, cultural, and religious backgrounds of the participants. Language and behaviour during interviews will reflect cultural appropriateness.

5. **Transparency and Accountability**:

   The research process will remain transparent, and any limitations or biases will be clearly reported in the final documentation. Acknowledgment of support and honest presentation of findings will be ensured.

By integrating these ethical safeguards and acknowledging the research's limitations, this study seeks to uphold both academic integrity and social responsibility while contributing meaningful insights into the lives of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi.

6. Sources of Data Collection

In order to understand thoroughly the complex nexus of socio-economic status and health conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi City, this study will strategically utilize the dual combination of both primary and secondary sources of data gathering. This multi-dimensional measure will provide a sound and in-depth understanding of the multiple dimensions involved in the problem of research, both direct information from the target group and general contextual data.

1. Primary Sources

Primary data, forming the foundation of this research, will be collected with great care directly from the auto-rickshaw drivers themselves using structured research tools and participatory fieldwork techniques. These direct interaction techniques are:

- **Interview Schedule:** As the primary tool for obtaining firsthand information, the interview schedule will be designed with great care to obtain a broad range of data points. It will include a vast majority of close-ended questions in order to allow quantitative analysis of demographic features (age, education, migration experience), economic position (income, spending, debt, car ownership), work circumstances (daily duration, route types, trip earnings), physical and mental illness conditions (frequency of certain ailments, stress level, access to healthcare), and subjective perceptions of drivers about prevailing policies, regulatory difficulties, and general well-being. The addition of a few open-ended questions will give drivers meaningful space to describe their experiences, challenges, and opinions in their own words, adding nuance and qualitative richness to the largely quantitative dataset.
- **Quasi-Participant Observation:** To go beyond self-report data and better understand the embodied realities of the drivers' everyday lives, the researcher will conduct quasi-participant observation on the chosen operational routes of Ranchi. This approach will

entail the researcher spending significant time in the field, partially embedding themselves in the day-to-day activities of the drivers by watching their interactions with passengers, fellow drivers, traffic authorities, and the wider urban context. Close field notes will be recorded to capture their work patterns, coping strategies, problems faced (such as traffic congestion, passenger interactions, and regulatory challenges), and their overall demeanour and behaviors. These context-based findings, extracted through observational observation, will act as a key complement to the systematic interview data, presenting a more textured and subtle picture of the drivers' socio-economic and health realities. This approach will facilitate the triangulation of findings and the location of possible inconsistencies or hidden dimensions of their lives.

2. Secondary Sources

Secondary data will play a vital role in establishing the broader context of the study, providing valuable background information, facilitating the validation of primary findings, and offering crucial supporting evidence from existing knowledge and documented sources. These sources include:

- **Government Reports:** Data and publications issued by different government departments, such as the Transport Department, urban planning authorities, traffic regulatory authorities, and labour departments, will be examined critically. These reports should provide insights into the current policy regimes that control the auto-rickshaw industry, official statistics regarding vehicle registration and permits, accident statistics involving auto-rickshaws, and data regarding fines or toll regulations affecting drivers. This information will provide insight into the official point of view and the regulatory environment under which the drivers work.
- **Academic Research and Journals:** A detailed reading of existing scholarly research carried out in scholarly journals and books on related topics like informal sector work in urban India, urban transport systems and their problems, transport workers' labour conditions, and public health problems common in similar occupational groups will be done. This review of literature will be instrumental in constructing the theoretical and conceptual framework of the present study, outlining existing knowledge gaps, and situating the findings within the larger academic discourse.
- **Newspapers and Magazines:** Articles, in-depth interviews, and feature stories appearing in credible newspapers and magazines that directly cover issues related to auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi and other such urban areas, the nature of urban commuting, the effect of traffic rules on informal transport, and the new challenges arising from new mobility modes such as e-rickshaws and digital ride-hailing platforms will be examined. These sources are able to give us up-to-date insights into the day-to-day lives and problems encountered by drivers as described in the press.
- **NGO Reports and Transport Surveys:** Information, reports, and surveys carried out by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations actively engaged in transport workers' rights, health outreach programmes for informal labourers, and comprehensive urban livelihood studies will be looked into. These sources tend to offer useful bottom-up views and may reveal shortcomings in current

government policies and support systems, providing a more critical and advocacy-based understanding of the scenario.

To comprehensively examine the intricate interplay of socio-economic status and health conditions among auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi City, this study will strategically employ a combination of both primary and secondary sources of data collection. This multi-faceted approach will ensure a robust and nuanced understanding of the diverse dimensions inherent in the research problem, providing both direct insights from the target population and broader contextual information.

7. Selection of the Field:

Ranchi, Jharkhand's capital, is not just an educational and administrative center but also a fast-growing urban center characterized by rapid population changes and infrastructural development. According to Census 2011, Ranchi boasted a population of around 10.7 lakh, which has increased significantly over the last 10 years with rural-to-urban migration, urbanization, and increasing job opportunities. The metropolis offers a rich social mosaic of mixed tribal and non-tribal peoples, diverse occupational sectors, and heavy dependence on informal employment, especially in transportation.

Auto-rickshaws, particularly shared auto-rickshaws, are the backbone of daily mobility in Ranchi. The vehicles occupy an important niche in the city's transport system, offering a low-cost and flexible mode of commute. The Ranchi Regional Transport Authority (RTA) states that there are more than 25,000 registered auto-rickshaws, but most operate unofficially without registration. Shared autos monopolize major city routes, connecting residential neighbourhoods, markets, railway stations, and institutional areas. Not only do they enable mass transit but also generate employment for thousands of drivers.

With this context, Ranchi is a very suitable location for a sociological study of the socio-economic standing and health status of auto-rickshaw drivers. It provides a typical illustration of informal urban transport economies in medium-sized Indian cities, marked by infrastructural constraints, rising competition from app-based services and e-rickshaws, and the socioeconomic exposures of informal workers.

Selection of Routes and Sample Distribution

To ensure comprehensive coverage and sociological diversity, the study will be conducted using a purposive sample of 200 shared auto-rickshaw drivers. These participants will be selected through a non-probability purposive sampling technique, divided equally across four major shared auto routes, with 50 drivers from each route. The chosen routes reflect high ridership, intense competition, and diverse socio-economic interaction zones, which are essential for understanding the complex realities of informal transport work.

Selected Routes:

1. **Railway Station to Ratu Road**

   This route connects a major transit hub with a densely populated residential and commercial corridor, capturing drivers who serve a highly mobile and varied commuter base.

2. **Booty More to Ratu Road**

   A vital intra-city route that intersects market zones, educational institutions, and residential colonies, representing both economic activity and daily urban flow.

3. **Kanke to Birsa Chowk**

   This route integrates health infrastructure including RINPAS and the Central Institute of Psychiatry, administrative areas, and suburban clusters, making it ideal for studying drivers operating across mixed-income settings.

4. **Birsa Chowk to Booty More**

   A frequently traversed route that links administrative districts and dense commercial zones, showcasing drivers who often navigate high congestion, diverse passenger loads, and competition from other transport services.

These selected routes enable the research to capture a comprehensive and representative cross-section of Ranchi's shared auto-rickshaw landscape. The chosen areas reflect intersections of economic activity, healthcare access, residential variety, and transport dependency, making them sociologically rich spaces for examining the livelihoods, challenges, and well-being of informal transport workers.

8. Analysis of Data:

The analysis of data in this research will be conducted systematically, aligning with the exploratory research design, the primarily quantitative data collected, and the supplementary qualitative insights gathered through quasi-participant observation. The primary tool for quantitative data analysis will be **MS Excel**. The data collected through the structured interview schedules will be entered into MS Excel, and functions will be used to calculate frequencies and percentages for categorical variables (e.g., social background characteristics, vehicle ownership, policy awareness). Measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and measures of dispersion (standard deviation, range) will be computed for continuous variables (e.g., age, income, working hours, self-reported health scores). These descriptive statistics will provide a comprehensive profile of the socio-economic and health attributes of the 200 auto-rickshaw drivers in the sample, broken down by the four selected routes in Ranchi.

To explore potential relationships and associations between different variables, **cross-tabulations** will be generated in MS Excel. For instance, we might cross-tabulate route of operation with income levels or social background with reported health issues. To assess the statistical significance of any observed associations between categorical variables, basic tests (using Excel functions or manual calculation where necessary for exploratory purposes) will be employed. For examining the strength and direction of linear relationships between continuous variables, correlation analysis will be conducted. This will help determine if, for example, longer working hours are associated with lower reported income or poorer health.

The qualitative data gathered through field notes from the quasi-participant observation will be analysed using a basic thematic approach. This will involve systematically reading through the textual data, identifying recurring themes, patterns of experiences, and narratives related to the drivers' socio-economic challenges, health concerns, and perceptions of their working lives. These qualitative insights will be used to contextualize and enrich the interpretation of the

quantitative findings, providing a deeper understanding of the underlying reasons and experiences behind the statistical patterns observed. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative elements within MS Excel's capabilities will allow for a comprehensive, albeit exploratory, analysis of the data collected.

9. Significance of the Study:

The present research carries profound academic, social, and policy significance, offering a valuable contribution to the evolving discourse on informal labour, the dynamics of urban livelihoods, and the details of public transport systems within rapidly growing cities like Ranchi. Academically, the study aims to substantially enrich the existing body of literature on informal labour markets, with a specific focus on the often-under-researched segment of self-employed transport workers. By strategically integrating established theoretical frameworks from scholars such as A.R. Desai, Amartya Sen, and Abraham Maslow, the research effectively bridges classical and contemporary sociological perspectives on critical concepts like labour organization, social class structures, and the multifaceted nature of social exclusion. Moreover, it applies the lens of the sociology of informal work to a concrete urban setting, thereby generating novel empirical insights grounded in the lived experiences of these workers and contributing to a more robust, field-based understanding of the diverse actors that constitute the informal economic landscape of Ranchi.

From a social standpoint, auto-rickshaw drivers in urban centers like Ranchi serve as the very backbone of local mobility, facilitating the daily commutes of a significant portion of the working and middle classes. Despite their undeniable and vital contribution to public service, they often remain a socially marginalized group, frequently overlooked in terms of societal recognition, access to essential welfare benefits, and focused policy attention. This study endeavours to bring their often-invisible lived realities into sharper focus while encompassing their persistent economic struggles, the challenges they face concerning their physical and mental health, the inherent daily risks associated with their occupation, and their precarious lack of adequate social security provisions. By amplifying their voices and meticulously documenting their experiences, the research aims to cultivate greater public awareness, foster a deeper sense of empathy, and promote a more nuanced understanding of a profession that is frequently taken for granted by the wider urban populace.

In terms of its policy implications, the findings generated by this study hold the potential to significantly inform and influence the development of targeted policy initiatives at both the local and state levels of governance. Given the often-limited presence of robust regulatory frameworks or comprehensive welfare policies specifically designed for auto-rickshaw drivers, this research can serve as a crucial evidence-based document, providing compelling data and insightful analysis to advocate for much-needed improvements in their working and living conditions. These potential improvements could include facilitating better access to essential health and accidental insurance coverage, the formulation of fundamental labour rights and sustainable pension schemes tailored for informal transport workers, the promotion of more organized and inclusive urban planning that incorporates dedicated routes, designated parking areas, and essential rest zones for auto-rickshaw drivers, and the development of strategic regulations and support mechanisms to balance the competitive pressures arising from the increasing presence of e-rickshaws and app-based transport services within the city's transportation ecosystem.

10. Relevance to the Present-Day Problems and Needs of Society:

The present research on auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi City holds significant relevance to several important present-day problems and societal needs, particularly within the context of rapidly urbanizing nations like India. With increasing rural-to-urban migration and limited formal employment opportunities, the informal sector continues to absorb a large segment of the urban workforce, and auto-rickshaw driving represents a significant form of informal self-employment in many Indian cities. Understanding the challenges faced by these workers, including income insecurity, lack of social security, and risky working conditions directly addresses the critical need to develop effective strategies for poverty alleviation and the improvement of livelihoods within the informal economy. The insights from this study can inform policies aimed at providing better support and recognition for informal workers who contribute significantly to urban economies.

Auto-rickshaw drivers often belong to marginalized socio-economic groups with limited access to resources and social capital. This research sheds light on their experiences of social exclusion and their struggles for recognition and dignity. By highlighting their vulnerabilities and contributions, the study can contribute to broader societal efforts aimed at reducing social inequality and promoting the inclusion of marginalized urban populations in mainstream development processes.

The study's focus on the physical and mental health of auto-rickshaw drivers addresses a crucial aspect of urban public health. Their continuous exposure to environmental hazards, and demanding work schedules often lead to significant health issues. Understanding the prevalence and determinants of these health problems is essential for developing targeted health interventions and advocating for the inclusion of informal workers in public health programs and occupational health initiatives.

As cities grapple with increasing traffic congestion and the need for sustainable transportation solutions, the role of para-transit systems like auto-rickshaws remains critical, especially for last-mile connectivity. Understanding the socio-economic ecosystem of auto-rickshaw drivers is vital for formulating inclusive and sustainable urban transport policies. This research can provide evidence to inform regulations, infrastructure planning in a way that supports the livelihoods of drivers while enhancing urban mobility. This study aims to equip city planners, transport authorities, and non-governmental organizations with the necessary data and insights to align their developmental strategies more effectively with the on-the-ground realities experienced by these essential transport providers.

The lack of comprehensive policies and social security provisions for informal workers like auto-rickshaw drivers is a significant governance challenge. The empirical findings of this study can provide valuable data for policymakers at the local and state levels to develop more targeted and effective interventions. This includes advocating for better access to insurance, basic labour rights, and social protection schemes tailored to the specific needs of informal transport workers, ultimately contributing to more equitable and just urban governance.

overall, this research on the auto-rickshaw drivers of Ranchi speaks to several interconnected and pressing issues of our time: urban poverty, public health in urban settings, the need for sustainable and inclusive urban development, the challenges of social inequality, and the imperative for responsive and equitable urban governance. By focusing on this specific

occupational group within a rapidly growing city, the study offers insights that have broader relevance for understanding and addressing the challenges faced by the vast and often overlooked informal workforce that sustains urban life in India and other developing nations.

11. Contribution to the Existing Knowledge:

The present research is an important addition to the sociological literature on informal work, urban survival, and public health through a close exploration of the everyday lives of shared auto-rickshaw drivers in Ranchi city, Jharkhand. Although there is a large and expanding literature on urban informal work, much of it concentrates on construction workers, street vendors, or domestic workers, with relatively little attention being given to informal urban transport workers, particularly in medium-sized cities such as Ranchi. This study fills that gap by charting the complex interconnections between social background, economic vulnerabilities, and health conditions among auto-rickshaw drivers in a context of rapid urbanization.

By focusing on one specific occupational group from the informal transport sector, the study brings into focus the ways in which caste, origin of community, education, and history of migration intersect with livelihood options. It brings to the surface the intricate ways in which economic insecurity, bodily fatigue, and psychological stress structure everyday life for informal workers. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches facilitates multidimensional analysis beyond simple statistics to capture subjective realities and survival mechanisms of the often-marginalized drivers in policy conversations.

This study also enhances the understanding of informal labour by deploying a robust theoretical framework that includes Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, A.R. Desai's Marxist Perspective on the State and Informal Labour, Harry Braverman's Labour Process Theory, and the social construction of health. These frameworks allow for a deeper exploration of not just what problems exist, but why they persist, and how they are embedded in larger structures of inequality, governance, and urbanization. Ultimately, this study aims to inform inclusive urban and labour policy frameworks that recognize the dignity, challenges, and rights of informal transport workers in India's growing cities.

12. Future work:

The present research establishes crucial foundations to understand the socio-economic and health-related lives of auto-rickshaw drivers working within Ranchi city's informal transport economy. By illuminating an under-explored occupational group, the study provides meaningful empirical contributions which can be used as a starting point for future policy and academic studies.

The most significant contribution of this work is its close documentation of the drivers' everyday experiences, determined by caste, community, history of migration, education, and urban pressure. These can act as stimulations for other researchers to conduct comparative research in other cities, so that by identifying regional differences and impacts of local administration, infrastructure, and policy, a more informed understanding can be developed.

The multi-theoretical model employed here, combining Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, Marxist understandings of informal labor, and Braverman's theory of labor processes, presents a distinct, integrative eye that adds value to sociological analysis. It invites future scholars to

employ inter-disciplinary vision combining sociology, political economy, and health research to explore informal work's structural and everyday distinctions. This framework can be used or adapted to examine other informal jobs like gig workers, street vendors, domestic workers, or delivery riders, particularly in the context of technological upsets and platform economies.

The present research also places health, both physical and mental, at the center as a key element of informal labour, a topic that is still underdeveloped in urban sociology. By pointing to occupational disease, mental distress, and poor access to medical care, it opens the door to subsequent research that can address more thoroughly public health effects and consider long-term trends through longitudinal or interdisciplinary study designs. Collaborations among sociologists, public health professionals, and city planners could further sharpen the effects of such research.

The present study highlights the policy gap enveloping informal workers and the ineffectiveness of current welfare programs. Future research can look at bridging the gap between policy aspiration and ground realities, examine matters of implementation and reach, and suggest new models of social security and worker safety based on the urban informal sector.

In conclusion this research presents a valuable groundwork for the intensification of scholarship on informal urban livelihoods alongside evidence-based policy-making. Through its interdisciplinary work and depth in empirical work, it is set to inform and shape research directions that will come to ensure the urbanization of growth to make it inclusive and equitable for all informal workers across India.

Tentative Chapterization

1. Introduction
2. Review of The Literature
3. Area of The Study and Research Methodology
4. Migration Patterns among Auto-rickshaw Drivers
5. Social relationship of Auto-rickshaw Drivers
6. Economic Status of Auto-rickshaw Drivers
7. Health Conditions of Auto-rickshaw Drivers
8. Data Interpretation and Analysis
9. Conclusion and Suggestion

   Bibliography

   Annexure

   Schedules

   Photographs

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